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*A dispassionate Inquiry into the probable Causes and
Consequences of Enthusiasm.*

A SERMON,

PREACHED JULY 30, 1798,

In the Parish Church of ST. MARY'S, READING,

AT THE

VISITATION

OF THE RIGHT REVEREND

[Douglas]
JOHN, LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

By the Rev. JOSEPH EYRE, M.A. *K*

Vicar of St. GILES'S, READING, and of AMBROSEDEN, OXFORDSHIRE.

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1798.

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[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

Advertisement of the Author.

WHEN the following Discourse was preached, the Author can most truly say, He had no design either to irritate by it and provoke any Sect or Party, or to publish it. Having since, however, been called upon by Some, and solicited by Others, to print it, he thinks it best upon the whole to comply with this: and accordingly submits it, with all deference and humility, to the Candor of a wider Circle, to the public eye.



He is aware, that, besides the many other defects which may be found, it may be thought in some respects to savour too much of Egotism for Those that are beyond the limits of the Place where it was delivered: He desires to Apologize for this.

He begs also to avail himself of the present opportunity to say, that if any one should so far notice these few Pages as to make answer to any parts of them, the Author shall not think himself engaged, or be likely, to reply; having neither leisure nor inclination for Controversy, especially Religious Controversy, which is too often conducted with so much acrimony on either side, as to defeat, rather than advance, the object which He wishes always to keep before him, and which He had much in view in framing his Discourse, that of promoting what he conceives to be the true spirit of Christian Charity amongst Men, mutual Forbearance, general Goodwill, and the Benefit of All.

A

S E R M O N.

ROMANS X, V. 2.

THEY HAVE A ZEAL OF GOD, BUT NOT ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE.

CALLED upon, as I have been, my Reverend Brethren, to discourse before you at the present time of meeting, on 'what Subject can it be more natural, more reasonable methinks that I should speak, than on some such as that which the words of the text appear to imply? From the abundance of the heart, said our blessed Master, who knew well what was in man, the mouth speaketh. And standing as I do in the situation which it has been assigned me to occupy in this part of the Land, it may be imagined, I conceive, that what relates to such a subject must have presented itself both to my eyes and to my ears, to my sight and my understanding, very frequently. It is impossible for any one to respect the memory of my Predecessor* more highly than myself; his well-meant Piety, his extensive Liberality, his amiable Manners in society. These were such as I may be glad to imitate at humble distance, hardly can I hope to equal. With pleasure I pay the tribute due to his Virtues upon every occasion. But it is my lot, as coming

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* The Honourable and Reverend William Bromley Cadogan.

47

after Him, to occupy a station, where Enthusiasm, or Fanaticism, or by whatever other name the same thing may be signified, prevails and abounds. In the prosecution of my Subject, therefore, as discoursing before you at the present hour, I purpose to consider, "What may be thought the nature or character of Enthusiasm in general, the sort of Persons whom in particular it seems more especially to influence, and the Mistakes which it appears to occasion in its Followers: This will lead me insensibly to a brief vindication of our Established Church, such as the time will allow: which I shall conclude with some Observations rather more at length, of mild Admonition to those who differ from Us in opinion, and of respectful Caution to Ourselves."—In discharging thus what I persuade myself is my duty, I humbly solicit the Candor of all my Hearers. If, among Those who may happen to be now within these Walls, there should be any on the one hand, who may expect and think it right that I should speak of Those who thus differ from Us with what They would deem perhaps a Just degree of severity, I must beg leave to say, They will be disappointed. Or should there be among them any on the other hand, who may apprehend that I might avail myself of the present opportunity to launch out against them with sharp invective, They will be disappointed also. The same line of Candor and Moderation which I prescribed to myself from the first, upon coming to reside in this Place, and to which I hope I have uniformly adhered, the same line I shall still endeavour to keep steadily before me. To that Almighty Being, in whose holy House We are now assembled, who sees and hears Us at this very moment, to Him I can safely and confidently appeal, that there is no particle of malevolence within my breast; and that in what from my subject I may be led to say, though it may not accord with the sentiments of some, yet the only object which I have in view is the good and welfare of Us all.

After apologizing, as may perhaps be thought necessary, for these particulars of Exordium, let Us proceed to examine the nature or character of Enthusiasm.—And of this I trust it may be safely said, that, generally speaking,

speaking, it produces evil. Though its effects may be different, according to the different dispositions upon which it operates; though in some of these it may shew itself to be gloomy and severe, in others precipitate and violent; yet, from continued observation, the signs or traces of it have been commonly such, as to indicate more or less a distortion of the mind which leads into error. The celebrated writer* Plutarch, in his treatise of comparison between Atheism and Superstition, which may well be taken as another name for Enthusiasm, and after Him our great Countryman, Bacon,† possessing both of them superior understandings, have transmitted to Us their opinion upon the subject We are considering; and appear to warn Us in strong terms against the dangers to which it is exposed. They agree in representing it as debasing the human mind, as engendering unworthy ideas of devotional duty, as producing evils not inferior to those which arise from Infidelity itself. Other Writers‡ since have expressed themselves nearly to the same effect. Certain it is from experience, that the actions to which Enthusiasm in its various shapes, or, as it is well defined by the Apostle in our Text, a “ Zeal without Knowledge,” has at different times given birth, are of a dangerous sort and prejudicial to Society. It was this kind of Zeal which the Almighty himself appears from Sacred Writ to have reprehended of old, even in his chosen Servant; when upon the Prophet § declaring that all the faithful Priests were slain by the sword, and that He only was left to stand alone, it is replied, “ Yet have I left me seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal.” The answer of our Saviour to the two Disciples that would have || called down fire from Heaven upon the Inhabitants of the Village who were not inclined to receive them because they worshipped at another place, when
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* See his Treatise Περὶ Δαιμονίας.

† See his Treatise on Atheism and Superstition.

‡ Bishop Lavington on Fanaticism. Bishop Warburton on Grace. Bishop Gibson on Enthusiasm. Trapp's Discourses. Tottie's Charges. Dr. Croft on Fanaticism. Daubeney's Guide to the Church, &c. &c.

§ I. Kings, xix, v. 14, 18.

|| Luke ix, v. 55.

He said, " Ye know not what manner of spirit Ye are of," is familiar to all. The same spirit of mistaken Zeal it was, that shewed itself at one time with unbridled violence, when, soon after the Reformation, the * Anabaptists of those days in Germany broke out into such dreadful excesses; and again shewed itself at another time with sullen gloom, when among Ourselves, about the period of the Usurpation, the Hypocrisy of the † Puritans prevailed, and under the pretence of seeking the Lord as Saints the most atrocious crimes were deliberately perpetrated. By its fruits, it has been most justly said, the Tree is known. It is true, it has been usually seen that extremes beget extremes. The calamities which have laid waste the wretched Kingdom opposite to our own, and which may justly be ascribed to that extinction of all Religious Principle, that general diffusion of Infidelity which has so industriously taken place, have been thought by some to derive their real origin from the Superstition which prevailed there before. And in our own Kingdom it has been made a question by judicious and very sensible Men, whether, at this present moment, our Land has more to fear from the spread, as it has been called, of Infidelity, or from the spread of Enthusiasm. Happy would it be for Us, if We could but preserve the sober golden Mean between the two extremes! Happy would be our People in such a case! Happy in serving thus the Lord their God!

In speaking thus of the pernicious effects which have been usually known to follow from a " Zeal without Knowledge" as to its general character, very much would my meaning be misrepresented, if it were therefore inferred, that the same was to be applied to every Individual, to all those who may be denominated Enthusiasts. Among These, We are willing to conclude, that with very many the object is good; but We conceive them to be under a delusion in the mode of pursuing it. With a commendable intention, the error among such is in the excess. As for the sort of persons at large who may be thought more especially to be

* See the Histories of those Times.

† See the English Histories of that Period.

be influenced by Enthusiasm, These from observation we may chiefly presume to be, either such as are under the dominion of strong constitutional passions, or such as possess weak and slender understandings. On the one hand They are oftentimes such as having in earlier days perhaps gone far in the indulgence of youthful levities or excesses, think it now high time to stop in their career: and with the same impetuosity, only changing the object, as they before served one master not a little, so now they are resolved "to * serve" another master "much". Of this sort there are unquestionably many. Or on the other hand They are oftentimes such, as not trusting to the guidance of their own reason, are easily led away by others more designing: and being worked upon by the principle of Fear, natural to weak minds, are so terrified with the idea of not serving God sufficiently after all they can do, that many of them have been seen to pass their days in a miserable state of melancholy despondence, and have frequently been known even to cut them off by deeds of desperation. Of this sort also there are many. In addition to both these, may it not be said, that the Votaries of Enthusiasm are apt likewise to be influenced by a love of Novelty and a love of Power? The love of Power has a stronger hold upon the human mind than is commonly imagined: and the love of Novelty has scarcely less. With the higher divisions of Mankind, the former motive prevails most; with the lower classes it is the latter. And whether it be, that Some are not willing to rest satisfied with their station in Society unless they can obtain more notice, more distinction; are desirous of being rulers and chief men in their generation; as Saint John said of Diotrophes, "love to have the preeminence"; and hope to derive importance to themselves by singularity of conduct, by avowedly deviating from whatever has been long fixed and established: Or whether it be, that Others, "having itching ears", as the Apostle speaks in *his* days, are ever wanting to hear "some new thing"; from an insatiable credulity are fond of "heaping to themselves Teachers";

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* II Kings, x, 5, 18.

and love especially to be told what is strange, and formidable, and alarming: from whichever motive it proceeds, it unfortunately so happens, that although the "way of Holiness is a Highway," as the Prophet says, in which "the wayfaring man though simple need not err", yet too many there are that forsake it; and notwithstanding that by the Almighty in his Word We are repeatedly cautioned not to "turn aside either to the right hand or to the left," yet too many are continually seen to wander away into the bewildering labyrinths of Error and Mistake.

These Mistakes it was our purpose to notice, next in order. Such at least we *conceive* Enthusiasm has a tendency to occasion in its Followers. Of this sort it may here be sufficient to mention three: concerning which we shall make it our business to speak both as briefly and as moderately as possible.—The first of these we *conceive* to be, a Misinterpretation of certain passages in the Holy Scriptures. And this part of our work has not only been remarked upon by various Writers, but has also been so well done to our hands by a very able living Author*, that, though other instances of a similar nature might be adduced, it is impossible not to wish to use *his* words rather upon the occasion, both as far superior to our own, and as more especially a Justification of Ourselves. Upon the subject of what is called Election, he says, "At the first Institution of Christianity, the Community of Christians were a handful of Men connected amongst themselves by the strictest union, and divided from the rest of the world by a real difference of principle and persuasion. This Society considered collectively and as a body, were set apart from the rest of mankind for a more gracious Dispensation, as well as actually distinguished by a superior purity of life and conversation. In this view, and in opposition to the unbelieving world, They were discriminated in Scripture by titles of great seeming dignity and import: They were Elect, they were Called; they were Saints, they were in Christ. These terms were employed to distinguish

* Archdeacon Paley.—See his Visitation Sermon at Carlisle. Printed for R. Faulder, New Bond-street, 1790. Fourth Edition.

“ distinguish the professors of Christianity from the rest of mankind, in the
 “ same manner as the names of Greek and Barbarian, Jew and Gentile,
 “ distinguished the People of Greece and of Israel from other nations.
 “ But the application of such phrases is become now obscure. Some how-
 “ ever, supposing these expressions to have a perpetual meaning, and for-
 “ getting the original use of them, have given them a sense and an application
 “ extremely foreign from the design of their Authors; namely, to distin-
 “ guish Individuals amongst *Us*, the professors of Christianity from one
 “ another. Agreeably to which idea, the most flattering of these names,
 “ the Elect, the Called, the Saints, have by bold and unlearned men been
 “ appropriated to Themselves and their own party, with a presumption
 “ injurious to the reputation of our Religion amongst “ them that are
 “ without,” and disgusting to the sober part of its professors: whereas, that
 “ such titles were intended in a sense common to all that embraced Christi-
 “ anity, is plain from the many different passages in which they occur.”
 —Again, on the subject of Regeneration or a New Birth. “ The conversion
 “ of a grown person from Heathenism to Christianity, which is the case of
 “ conversion commonly intended in the Epistles, was in its first sense a
 “ change of which We have now no just conception. Accompanied as
 “ it was with the pardon of every former sin, this was such an æra in a
 “ man’s life, so remarkable a period in his recollection, such a revolution of
 “ every thing that was most important to him, as might well admit those
 “ strong figures and significant allusions by which it is described in Scrip-
 “ ture. But it is manifest that no change equal or similar to this can be
 “ experienced by *Us*, or by any one that is educated in a Christian Country,
 “ to whom the facts, precepts, and hopes of Christianity have from his very
 “ infancy been familiar. Yet notwithstanding this, the same language is
 “ still retained. And what has been the consequence? Among the dif-
 “ ferent senses in which this has been taken, Some have gone very far, and,
 “ in order to satisfy these expressions to their full extent, have imagined to
 “ themselves certain perceptible impulses of the Holy Ghost, by which,
 “ in an instant, and in a manner no doubt sufficiently extraordinary, They
 “ become

“ become new Creatures ; They are freed from Sin and from Death ; They
 “ are chosen, that is, and sealed, without a possibility of fall, unto final Sal-
 “ vation.”—Again also on the subject of Predestination. “ In opposition
 “ to the Jews, who were so much offended by the preaching of the Gospel
 “ to the Gentiles, Saint Paul maintains, that it was the intention of God
 “ from the first to substitute at a fit season, into the place of the rejected
 “ Israelites, a society of men taken indifferently out of all nations under
 “ Heaven, and admitted to be the People of God upon easier and more
 “ comprehensive terms. The scheme of collecting such a society was what
 “ God *foreknew* before the foundation of the world ; was what He did *pre-*
 “ *destinate*, was the *eternal purpose* which he purposed in Christ Jesus: and
 “ by consequence, this society of adopted persons, in their collective ca-
 “ pacity, were the objects of this *foreknowledge*, *purpose*, and *predestination*.
 “ Such doctrine has nothing in it either harsh or obscure. But what has
 “ been made of it? Losing sight of the proper occasion of these expres-
 “ sions, Some have applied them to the final destiny of Individuals at the
 “ Day of Judgment. And upon this foundation has been erected a doc-
 “ trine, which at once lays the axe to the root of all Religion, that of an
 “ absolute appointment to Salvation or to Perdition, independently of Our-
 “ selves or of any thing We can do ; by such interpretation, instead of
 “ shewing the impartial mercies of God against the narrow and excluding
 “ claims of Jewish prejudice, establishing unfortunately a Dispensation the
 “ most arbitrary and partial that can be devised.”

Without making comment upon the Misinterpretations which have
 been cited as above, and without adding to them, proceed We to what
 We deem the second article of Mistake in such as are termed Enthu-
 siasts.—And We apprehend that We call it by a very moderate name
 when We call it a mistake, if it be true, which I believe is generally
 allowed, that They charge *Us*, the Clergy of the Established Church, with
 not preaching the Gospel. Forbearing all retort upon such language,
 such expressions, it may be sufficient to say, that this, if it were founded,
 would

would be a charge of a heavy nature indeed: But, as it is in truth, may require only a very brief refutation. What! My Reverend Brethren! when I am speaking at this moment, when I am speaking, or rather, I should say, when We all of Us are speaking, upon each returning Sabbath Day, shall it be said, shall it be thought, that at such a serious and solemn time, We are Hypocrites, ὑποκριται, Histriones, Players, Men acting a part? Would to God that We were all of Us indeed better Preachers and better Men! But I humbly think, that as a Body We know our duty; and, with due allowance in the sight of God for the evident and unquestioned imperfection of human infirmity, I humbly think that as a Body We practise it. Are We not fully conscious for instance, are We not fully conscious, that We have Souls to be saved as well as They; that We must give an *account* of our Ministry; that We have a work to do, and woe will be to *Us* if We do it not; a Gospel to preach, and woe will be to *Us* if We preach it not? I persuade myself that We by no means keep back from our People any part of the "whole counsel of God", any of the peculiar doctrines of our Holy Religion: I persuade myself that We discourse upon these with earnestness and due Zeal: But if, in conjunction with these, We also * discourse upon those Commandments of the Law which Jesus Christ himself "came not to destroy but to fulfill," or upon those very important Duties of daily Life on which our Saviour himself preached so admirably in his Sermon on the Mount, or upon those holy Ordinances which our Church has thought fit to appoint, I would say it without presumption, I hope We are well employed. In fact, what, I pray, have We been doing all these years, each of Us for himself, in our
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* See in Bishop Taylor a list of Subjects proper for Sermons, and excellent advice for preaching: from both which the young Student in Divinity may collect, as the Author is ready to acknowledge He has long since done, many useful hints and directions.

Bishop Taylor's Sermons. Folio. Fifth Edition. Page 233, 234.

several Parishes and situations, among a * People that have been affectionately attached to Us, that have looked up to our lips as the dispensers of true knowledge, and that through God's Grace are to be guided by Us in the way of Salvation; What, I say, have We been doing all this time, if We have *not* preached the Gospel? But Nay, My Reverend Brethren! let Us not be needlessly alarmed at such an imputation; remembering that it comes from Those who may perhaps think it necessary that something at least should be alledged when they separate from Us. It is a small thing, We know, to be Judged of Man's Judgment. Whatever opinions Enthusiasts may form either of Themselves or of Us, to our own great Master alone We must stand or fall. And We would humbly trust, that at the Day of Judgment, (We would say it for *You*, My Brethren, as well as for Ourselves) We would humbly trust, that in the midst of our many other demerits, such a thing will *not* be laid to our charge.

A third mistake which We imagine Enthusiasts are liable to incur, and which it is therefore incumbent upon Us to mention, is the danger of causing † Schism which the Apostle expressly reprehends, the danger of separating from the good order of things Established already in our Land. The time will not permit me to enlarge upon the fact, undeniable as it is, that, in a religious point of view, there is a Bond of Christian Fellowship, by which all, as "Members of the same Body the Church, over which "Christ is the Head," are solemnly united and held together: nor is it easy to be conceived upon what sufficient plea the breaking of this Union can in ‡ such a case be Justified. But besides this, in a civil point of view also,

* "I dwell among mine own People." II King, iv, 5, 13.

Happy the Pastor, surely We may say, the *Sacerdos Paræcialis*, as Dr. Burton, of Eton, elegantly describes him, in his retired well-ordered Village; the peaceful abodes of which, Fanaticism, and the unhappy differences of Religious Opinion never yet entered and disturbed!—The Author could say this himself for nearly twenty years.

† "There should be no *Schism* in the Body." 1 Cor. xii, 25. On the Subject of Schism, see Daubeny's "Guide to the Church;" the greater part of which every Friend to the Constitution both in Church and State would do well to peruse.

‡ This refers no doubt to the recent instances of Enthusiasts that separate.

also, how far They that secede from the Church may be thought to secede likewise from the State, and from looking with a Jealous unfavourable eye upon the former may become in time inimical to the latter, is a particular on which I shall not take upon me to pronounce, especially from such a Place as this. I would rather hope that We may never be put to the trial of ascertaining this: and that, if We were put to it, They that entertain such an opinion might find it erroneous. There are probably many among the Enthusiasts who would at first be inclined to receive such a supposition with indignation; and be ready to cry out with Hazael to the warning Prophet, "Is thy Servant a Dog that he should do such things"? But We are not aware how far our passions might hurry Us away, when heated and inflamed by the pursuit of any favorite object. In the contest of words, one expression of acrimony begets another; and in the contest of actions, one injury gives rise usually to another from the opposing party. Like two Lines that run parallel together, how far soever they might proceed, though at little distance from each other, they would be never likely to meet. After much disagreement between Those that have been once Friends, the only point in which they commonly at last unite and agree, is in that of wondering how far each party has been unintentionally led to extremities against the other. With dissention of whatsoever kind it is the same. The beginning of it is, as Solomon says, like the letting out of water; which it is not afterwards in our power to stop when We will. Better surely would it be for Those, between whom the wall of Separation is in reality so slight, not to separate at all. Better would it be for All to dwell together like Brethren; to be as "Men of one mind in one House" of God; and to hold the Faith, not only in Righteousness of life, which is no doubt excellent, but also, which is scarcely less so, as our Church well expresses it, in Unity of spirit and in the bond of Peace.

Yes! excellent is that Church, methinks We are naturally led from this part of our Subject to make the assertion, beautiful is the language, admirable the system, which it sets before its Followers: and much must

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it be deemed a matter of regret that at any time it should be deserted. It will not be expected, I trust, that I should here enter upon a formal and elaborate defence of what We call our Established Church. The time will not admit of this: nor, if it would, can it, I conceive, be thought necessary. So admirably has this work been already executed by most able Master-builders, that it cannot either require or receive any further accession of strength from such a feeble hand as mine. After Jewell, and Chillingworth, and Hooker, and Barrow, and Tayler, and many others since that might be named, there remains little more to be done in this way than to meet occasionally the exigencies of new times. But in this respect, if it be only in Justice to our own People that faithfully continue with Us, We must be ready always to vindicate *our Church* from the attacks of every fresh assailant. And I have ever been of opinion, that if there be any one point of view in which it stands prominently forth with peculiar beauty more than in others, it is in that of Moderation and Temperateness which it unquestionably exhibits. An enemy alike to Bigotry in itself and to Persecution towards others, with Judicious mildness it spreads around the broad shade of Toleration: and is well contented to see others sit secure, or roam at large, beneath it. Like our happy well-poised Constitution, of which it forms an essential part, it is at equal distance in its true character from the dangers of excess on either hand. Or still further We may say, like the fortunate situation of that temperate Zone in which our own climate is placed, it is equally removed from heat or cold in either extreme. Whether We preach or pray, in every part of its service, We hold it to be the same. In its mode of Worship, if rightly represented, it neither runs wild into the extravagant distortions of frantic Fanaticism, nor sinks down lifeless into frigid insipidity: it is chaste and simple, yet attractive and energetic. In its Language, if properly expressed, it neither seeks on the one hand by incoherent effusions to work upon the imagination of credulous adherents, nor yet on the other hand does it become languid and monotonous so as not to excite concern or to arrest attention: it is with "sobriety and truth" as directed by the
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head, yet with earnestness and warmth as proceeding from the heart. Such, it may safely be asserted, is our Church. It is only to be wondered, that any of her Children should forget the Parent: it is only to be lamented with unaffected concern, that any should so suffer themselves to be wrought upon and beguiled as to forsake Her!

Thus then, in very imperfect manner indeed, but yet to the best of our ability, have We so far gone through the several particulars on which We proposed to discourse; such as the Occasion of our Subject, the nature or character of Enthusiasm in general, the Persons whom it seems most apt to influence, the Mistakes which it appears to cause in its Followers, and the vindication of our Established Church.—It remains for Us to conclude, as We also proposed, with some Observations, of mild Admonition to Those who differ from Us in opinion, and of respectful Caution to Ourselves.

The substance of the Admonition which We would address to Those who differ from Us in opinion, is simply this: that they might be induced to adopt in their general conduct, less Vehemence and more Candor.—Forbearing all remark upon the propriety of Those that by any means seduce away Congregations from their regular appointed Pastors, waving this and every thing of this kind that might be said, however justly, yet with an appearance at least of asperity, it may be sufficient to assert, as a Truth which cannot be controverted, that the violence of Man can never work the Righteousness of God. Notwithstanding the plea which may at any time be urged, of Zeal in behalf of Others, there is a Rule infinitely superior to this, by which, as We call ourselves Christians, our conduct ought invariably to be guided, the great and broad Rule of Christian Charity. Though Edifices were to be erected in any Place by the warmth of active Individuals, superior even in number to those that were reared once together in behalf of Religion in the centre of the Metropolis,* yet if the chief
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* Alluding to the 50 new Churches that were begun to be built in the City of London in the year 1710.

corner-stone of each of those Edifices be not laid in Charity, it is nothing. Or, if what is delivered in any of them, be with a design, either to depreciate other Teachers, or to allure away other Hearers, if what is there said be thus opposite to the true spirit and character of Evangelical Charity, however noisy it be and loud, however carrying with it the appearance of more disinterested earnestness and greater zeal, it is nothing: it is only, according to the emphatic expression of the Apostle on the same topic, "as the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal." In every part of daily life it is precisely the same. If jealousy and strife, if bigotry and prejudice, if bitterness and rancour, be suffered to occupy that place in the heart which ought only to be possessed by moderation and forbearance, by gentleness and mildness, it is much to be apprehended, that to such hearts, (as often as this be the case), the Gospel, however it be peculiarly professed, as to its real import and influence is considerably a stranger. That Gospel, that Law of our Saviour Jesus Christ, by which I trust We are all of Us to be guided through life, and to be judged after death, holds out to Us, in plain and simple and unadulterated manner, the doctrine of Charity or Love towards our Neighbour, as the *great* Commandment, the *end* of the Commandment, the *fulfilling* of the Law. "By this, says Christ himself, shall all men know that Ye are * *my* Disciples, if ye have Love one to another." Indicatory of this, We must remember, and as it were expressly preparing the minds of men for it, was the language of the Heavenly Host upon our Saviour's first coming down to dwell on earth; when, after proclaiming Glory to God on high, the next note which they sounded forth, was that of Goodwill towards Men. The influence which I should conceive is plainly to be drawn from hence, is, that as far as We any of Us deviate from this, so far, it is to be presumed, We offend against our duty. Or if We could be inclined at any time to be in doubt as to distinct particulars, We have only to refer ourselves for the clearest explanation to Saint Paul's well known Comment upon this doctrine of his Master; in which He most beautifully delineates the several features of Christian

Charity,

* John xiii, v. 35.

Charity, and concludes the whole with unequivocally declaring it to be greater and more excellent than even Faith or Hope. "The greatest of these, says He, is Charity." Let me be allowed then to recommend to Those who differ from Us, this essential principle of duty in its several parts. Let me be allowed to remind Them, in earnest solemn manner, what things are particularly said in that Gospel which We all of Us profess to follow, both of the "Wisdom which is from above," and of the "Fruits of the Spirit." Let me be allowed to speak thus, as from the heart wishing well to All: as wishing that the only strife henceforth between Us might be in the fair and manly and open competition of a good life; that although unfortunately We differ a little in some few points, it may yet be entirely in Charity as Christians; as They, who though they make some trifling variation in their road by the way, yet hope all of them to meet at last together at the same end of their Journey.

Such was the Admonition which We had to give to Others. And if any could take exception at any thing that may have been said, as in the smallest degree departing from that line of Moderation which We have uniformly endeavoured to keep in view, We must feel concern no doubt, but in vindication of Ourselves must be under the necessity of appealing to that general mode of life and manner of conversation, which, We trust, may have fairly been observed of Us by Others around. It has not, I believe, fallen to the lot of many of my Brethren to stand up against such a heavy load of prejudice and prepossession as awaited Myself upon coming to the situation to which I had been called in this Place. I hope I have a due sense of what I am doing at this moment: I feel no doubt a due degree of diffidence and awe when speaking now before the present Audience of learned and very Reverend Brethren: But I scruple not to confess, I do not feel that *unpleasant* perturbation, that *painful* agitation of mind, which I experienced on this very day of the last year, as it happened to be, when I presented myself to the mixed and very crowded Assembly in my new situation for the first time. Even to such Auditors as Those however, I
could

could still appeal, in vindication of my moderate conduct. But if I wish to avoid giving unnecessary offence on the one hand, when to Those that differ from Us in opinion, I recommend, with mild Admonition, less Vehemence and more Candor; I may very probably incur equal danger of offence on the other hand, when I proceed, as the plan of my Subject enjoins me, with respectful Caution, to recommend to Ourselves, less Indifference and more Zeal.—I must go on, notwithstanding, to do what I persuade myself is my duty on either side, without respect of persons. And in discharging my duty on *this* side, I am perfectly aware, that, in speaking before the present Assembly, I may be thought to imitate both the presumption and the absurdity of that Philosopher of old, who stood up before the great Carthaginian General to give lectures upon the subject of the Art of War. I can only say, No one can be more conscious of inferiority and imperfection in various respects, or more ready to acknowledge them. But the critical nature of the Time will, I trust, sufficiently plead excuse; will be conceived to say, * “is there not a cause”; and will Justify, I would hope, a more than ordinary plainness of speech even from any. And when We well know that too many of Those who are not with Us are always watching narrowly our conduct, are ready at all times to magnify the failings of our Order, and apt to affix indiscriminately upon the whole Body the little faults or indiscretions of any of its Members, in such a state of things, can it be imputed to an Individual as wrong, that He should wish to rouse up the vigilance and activity of Us all? Alas! If We allow ourselves to become indifferent, if We happen any of Us to slacken in the work which We have in hand, how can We expect that it should prosper or come to good? It is particularly requisite that We should Ourselves have a full sense of the importance of the Cause in which We are engaged. “Above all others, reverence Thyself;” was an admired precept of Pagan Antiquity. Far be it indeed from the design of a Discourse delivered from such a Place as this, to recommend ever that un-

seemly

seemly and disgusting arrogance of character, that Pharisaical superciliousness of deportment, odious as it is wheresoever it appears, which would seem to say, "stand by, I am holier than Thou." Far be it from Us ever to recommend this. We would only be understood to infer, that when once respect ceases to be paid, the useful influence, the ability of doing good, which the Man of God would certainly wish to possess, ceases in proportion with it. Yes! if a consciousness of the dignity and importance of our Function be not kept alive in the breast, if We forbear to pay a due attention to what may be the opinions of others around concerning Us, if We Ourselves in short become cold and careless and languid and indifferent, the regard that should attend upon our character will quickly be no more. It is impossible in fact that dignity can reside with impropriety of conduct. Like the discordant materials in Nebuchadnezzar's Image, they can never be brought to incorporate. It will be necessary therefore that each Individual of Us be strenuously upon his guard; as well that weaker Brethren may not be hurt by Him, as also that "occasion may be cut off from those which desire occasion to speak evil." He must take care to "walk in wisdom, as the Apostle says, towards Them that are without:" He must be as "a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed." If He wish to see the superstructure of Religious Purity, far as his province reaches, rise up under his hands fair and beautiful, it is for Him to lay a suitable foundation. In a word, if He hope that respect should attend upon his Ministry, as is necessary to its success, and as it ever ought, He must not be indifferent, suffer me to say so, He must respect Himself.—It is true indeed, We are not to wonder that at this time there should be so many differences of opinion upon religious subjects, that such a variety of Sects should be risen up amongst Us. For this is no other than what We were precisely taught by the Apostle to expect. From the sure word of Holy Writ We are plainly advertised, that in "latter days there should be Heresies;" that the "time should come, when Men would not endure sound Doctrine," or a "form of sound words;" but, as We observed before, would "heap to themselves Teachers." From the same authority

of the Holy Scriptures, and by the very words of our blessed Saviour, We are also told, that in latter days there should be "tumults and desolations" upon the earth; that nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and that there should be earthquakes, and famines, and troubles, in divers places." But what are We to infer from both these predictions, which we have seen very much fulfilled in our time? With respect to the former, or the encrease of Schism, We must not think it sufficient to pray against it as an evil and a sin, which We are wisely directed to do by our excellent Church Liturgy: We must also redouble our Zeal in the good cause of pure unpervverted Religion. And We must shew this our Zeal, not indeed by the ravings of the Pythian Priestesses or the Cumæan Sibyl, but by the steady, uniform, vigilant, conscientious discharge of the business which we have undertaken. In the same spirit of Moderation which We would ever recommend, and which well includes Zeal but of a more discreet more temperate kind, let this, We would say, be rather our device, these our * Insignia, "Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus." Let Us not be hurt at what Enthusiasm, or any other Adversary whatsoever, may lay to our charge as not being † on their side, if We are but strictly conscious that We do not deserve the imputation of ill. Against the broad shield which a blameless life holds out before a Man, the ‡ arrows of Calumny and Malevolence, like the feeble dart of old Priam, will usually fall down blunted and impotent. By well doing, as the Apostle speaks, by executing properly what We have to do, We may in time sufficiently put to silence the ignorance of foolish and ill-disposed Men. A calm and steady perseverance in the faithful discharge of our Parochial duties, will be the surest method, We may trust, not only of recommending ourselves as his Servants to our great Master, but also of rescuing the Church which We love from the unjust attacks of Heresy and Schism, of Obloquy and Misrepresentation. With respect to the
other

* See the Effigies of Bishop Taylor prefixed to his Works.

† "Who is on my side, Who?" II Kings, ix, v. 32.

‡ "They shoot out their arrows, even bitter words." Psalm lxxix, v. 3.

other event, that of Calamity coming upon the earth, here likewise **We** have only to persevere in our duty with the same tight Zeal. And this no doubt **We** must do; that if the Evils which threaten should fall upon **Us**, that if (which in mercy to our Land may Heaven avert!) **We** should see our Country laid waste, our Altars overthrown, our Families dispersed, and Ourselves called upon to suffer and to die; at that solemn and interesting hour, when Hypocrisy and disguise can usually be no longer employed to conceal the real motive, but the Secrets of all our hearts shall be tried and searched by the seriousness of the time, and laid bare to view, that even *then* **We** may be ready to give in the account of our Stewardship with decency and propriety, with humble faithfulness and integrity, as **We** ought. The Signs of the Times, as they are called, are certainly awful. There are few, **We** imagine, that will be hardy enough to deny this. How much longer I, who now address **You**, may be permitted to speak from such a Place as this; or, *like our Brethren in another Land, how much longer any of **Us** may still be permitted to meet as now in solemn Assembly together; Who shall presume to say? Let **Us** do the Work then which **We** have to do, with diligence and earnestness, as **They** who are aware that perhaps they may not again have the opportunity. Let **Us** go on each of **Us** to act To-day, precisely in such manner as **We** shall wish that **We** had acted if To-morrow **We** were to die.—Both Priest and People let **Us** be careful to do thus! Let **Us** do thus, that at the least **We** may deliver our own Souls: that, when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when He, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, shall come to call together his Flock, his faithful Servants from all parts, from every region of the quartered Globe, **We** may be admitted into that happy Fold, which **We** are taught shall then be made up of all Nations and Kingdoms; when the

Unity

* This written during the late Rebellion in Ireland, and the distresses of the Clergy there. It also, with the description above, much resembles what the French Clergy have undergone.

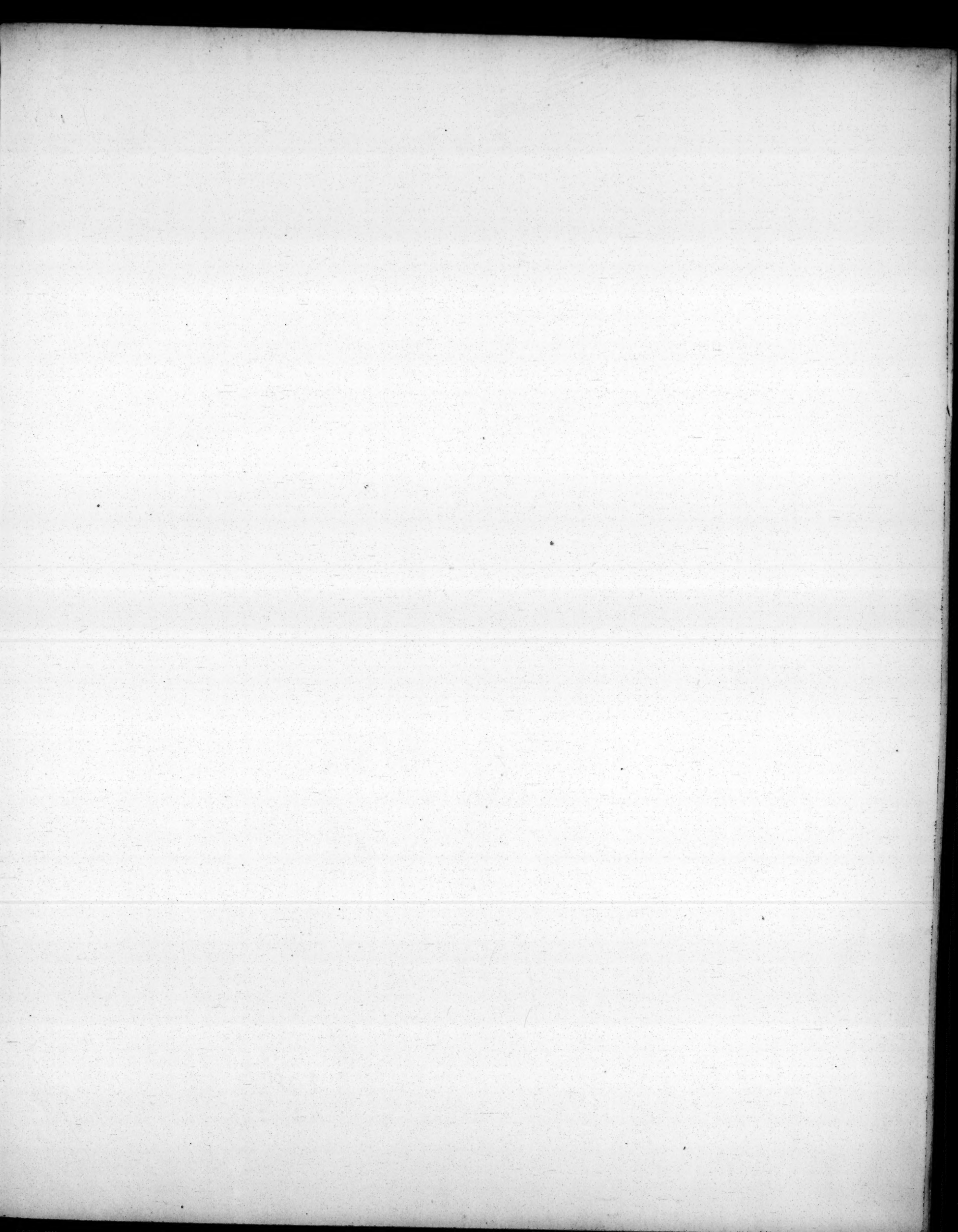
N. B. The Author desires here to observe, that He has all along abstained on purpose from any length of Notes and Quotations, which He might have copiously employed to enforce the several positions contained in his Discourse.

Unity of his Church which He so much himself recommended shall be fully reestablished, when the Wanderers shall be brought home, They that differ shall again be of one accord, and All, without any distinction more but degrees of Goodness alone, shall be together blessed through Him, and be made happy for ever!

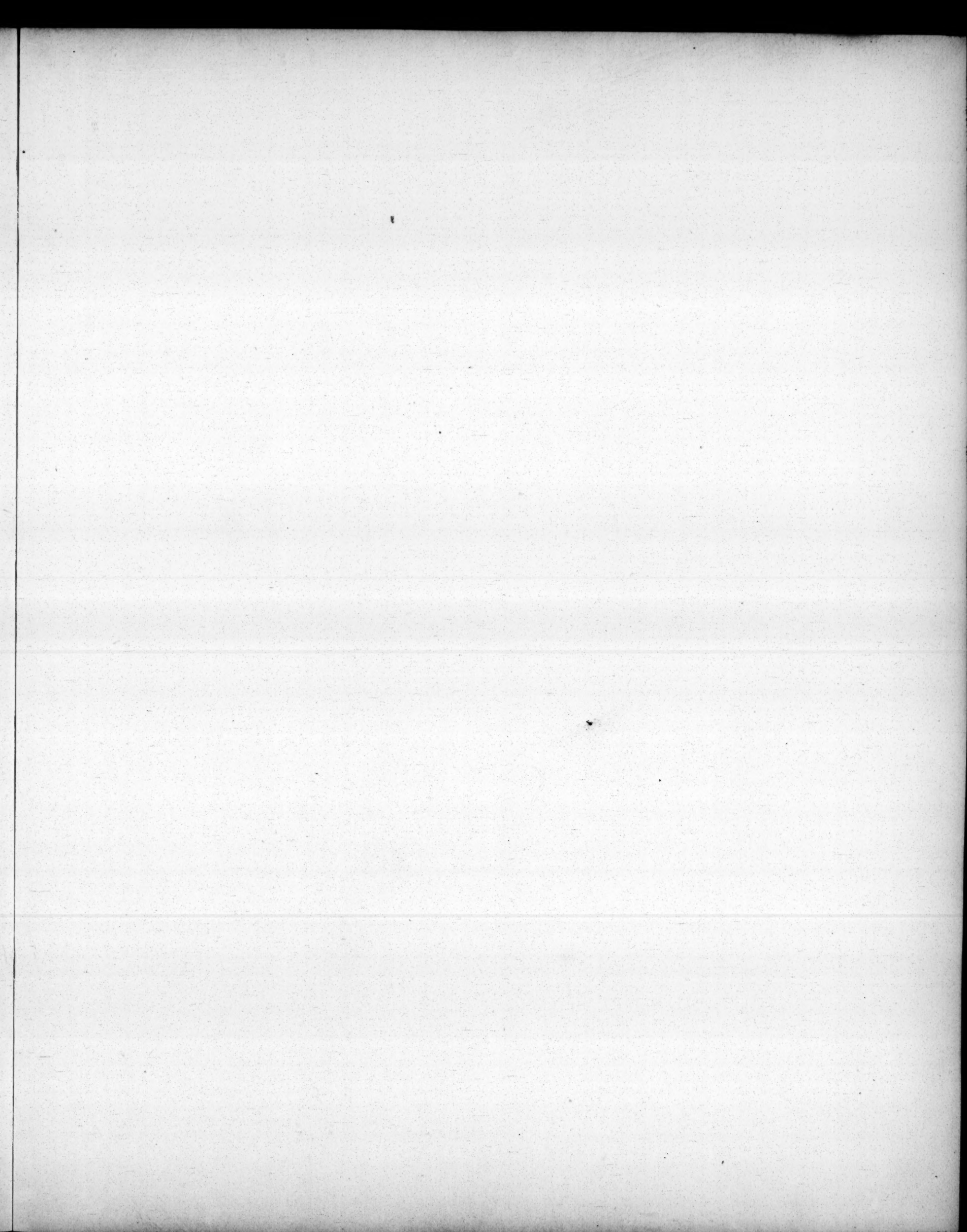
May the Lord God, our heavenly Father, of his infinite mercy so grant! —to whom, with his Blessed Son our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier, be ascribed by Us, as We are most bounden, all Glory and Honor, Thanksgiving and Praise, now and for ever! Amen.



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